

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3313

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CI

SUBJECT: SUPREME COURT ELECTS A NEW PRESIDENT

1. JOSE MARIA EYZAGUIRRE ECHEVERRIA WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT MAY 16 FOLLOWING THE RETIREMENT OF ENRIQUE URRUTIA. THE COURT ELECTED EYZAGUIRRE BY A TWELVE TO ONE VOTE, CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF DESIGNATING THE SENIOR JUSTICE AS PRESIDENT.
2. EYZAGUIRRE (63) IS A 1933 GRADUATE OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL. HE BEGAN HIS JUDICIAL CAREER IN 1930 AS A SECRETARY TO THE SUPREME COURT; WAS APPOINTED TO THE COURT OF APPEALS IN 1951; AND BECAME A JUSTICE ON THE SUPRME COURT IN 1960.
3. COMMENT. EYZAGUIRRE IS AN ENERGETIC JUSTICE, OF QUICK MIND, WHO HAS A REPUTATION OF BEING SOMEWHAT MORE ACTIVIST THAN URRUTIA. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR, HE HAS APPRECIATED IMPORTANCE OF ADHERING TO LEGAL PROCEDURES IN HANDLING INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEMS. HIS COURT MAY POSSIBLY FOCUS ON LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CHILE WHICH WERE NOT ADDRESSED BY THE URRUTIA COURT.
POPPER

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